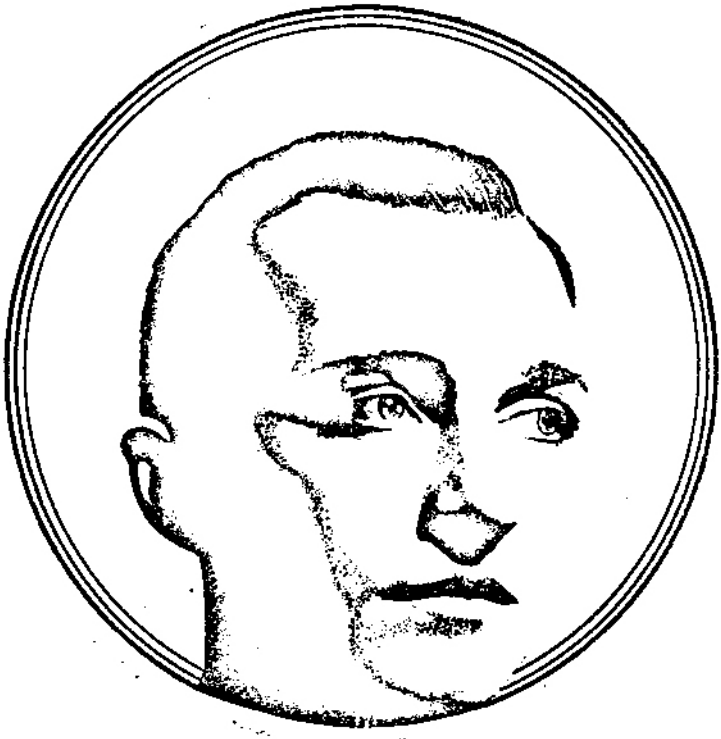
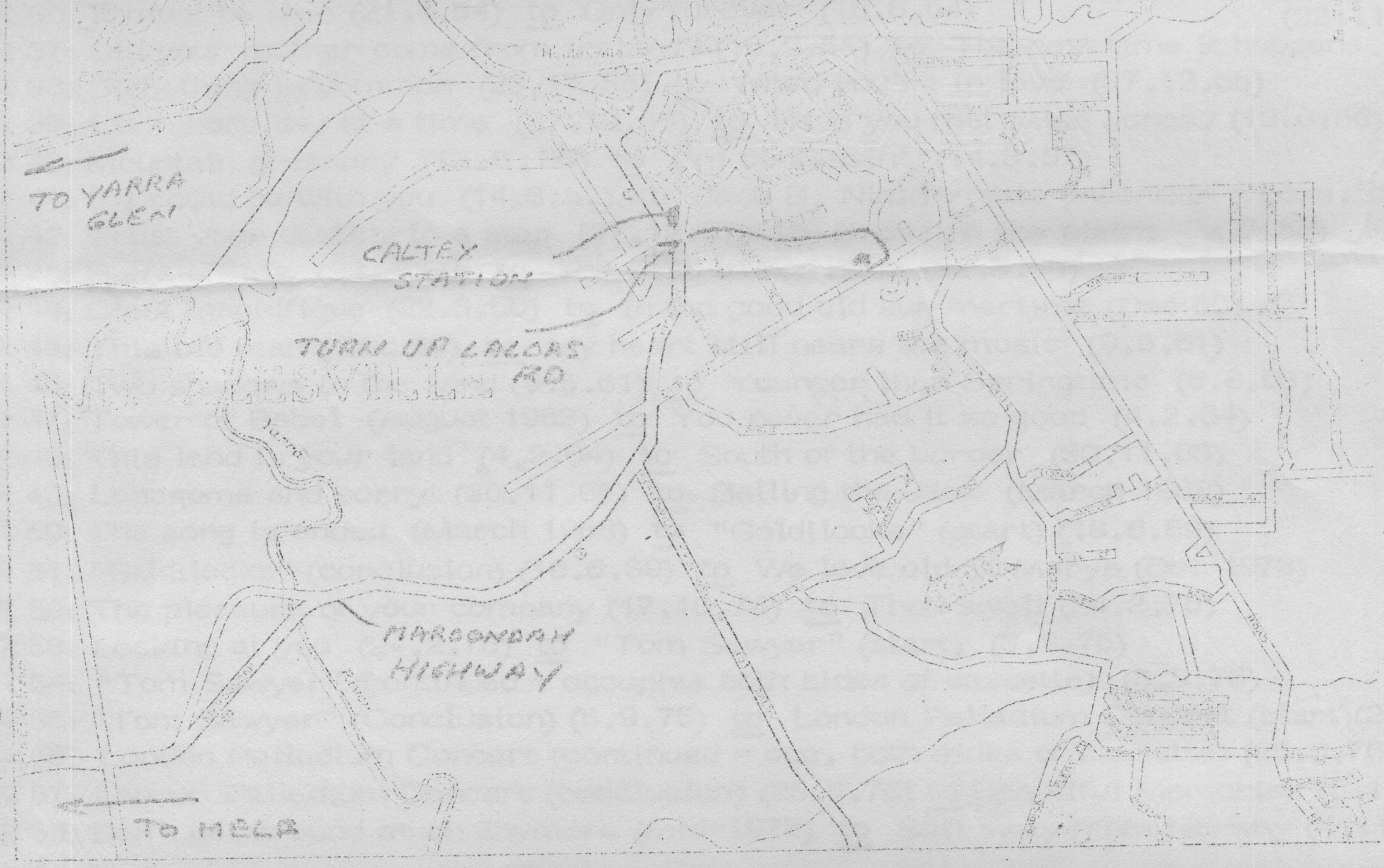


the Victorian Bing Crosby Society

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 1978



SITE OF BARBEQUE

SUNDAY 12TH NOVEMBER

DETAILS IN YOUR NEWSLETTER

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE EVENT OF THE YEAR

"KING OF JAZZ REVUE"

SUNDAY 19TH & 26TH NOVEMBER 8PM

BOOK YOUR SEATS NOW!

DETAILS IN YOUR NEWSLETTER

1. BING'S RECORDS

BR 1: I've got the girl (18.10.26) to From Monday on (12.1.28)
BR 2: Mississippi Mud (20.1.28) to Wa da da (19.6.28)
BR 3: That's grandma (19.6.28) to Your mother and mine (16.5.29)
BR 4: S'posin (16.5.29) to One more time (2.3.31)
BR 5: Wrap your troubles in dreams (2.3.31) to I found you (21.12.31)
BR 6: Snuggled on your shoulder (21.1.32) to Brother can you spare a dime (25.10.32)
BR 7: Sweet Sue (25.10.32) to I guess it had to be that way (26.8.33)
BR 8: Thanks (27.8.33) to The very thought of you (5.10.34)
BR 9: 2 cigarettes in the dark (5.10.34) to Twilight on the trail (24.3.36)
BR10: Touch of your lips (24.3.36) to A fine romance (19.8.36)
BR11: Me and the moon (19.8.36) to When the organ played 'O promise me' (12.11.37)
BR12: Let's waltz for old time sake (15.11.37) to Old folks (14.10.38)
BR 12B: (special addition) My reverie (14.10.38) to Stardust (22.3.39)
BR 13: God bless America (22.3.39) to Cynthia (30.6.39)
BR 14: Gus Edwards Medley (30.6.39) to Only forever (3.7.40)
BR 15: Ballad for Americans (6.7.40) to Yes Indeed (13.12.40)
BR 16: San Antonio Rose (16.12.40) to Oh how I miss You tonight (5.7.41)
BR 17: Don't break the spell (5.7.41) to Goodbye little darling (26.1.42)
BR 18: When the white azaleas start blooming (26.1.42) to My great grandfather (12.6.42)
BR 19: A boy in khaki (12.6.42) to Like someone in love (3.5.44)
BR 20: Begin the beguine (3.5.44) to Accentuate the positive (8.12.44)
BR 21: Road to Morocco (8.12.44) to It's been a long long time (12.7.45)
BR 22: Who's dream are You? (12.7.45) to Who threw the overalls? (6.12.45)
BR 23: It's the same old shillelagh (6.12.45) to All by myself (18.7.46)
BR24: Blue skies (18.7.46) to Emperor waltz (17.3.47)
BR 25: I still suits me (17.3.47) to Lullaby land (12.7.47)
BR 26: Suspense (12.7.47) to Lilli Bolero (11.12.47)
BR 27: Blue shadows on the trail (11.12.47) to Bali Hai (10.3.49) N.B. In 1948, there was almost no recording done due to a musician's strike. Hence the jump.
BR 28: Some enchanted evening (10.3.49) to The 4 winds and the 7 seas (6.6.49)
BR 29: Make believe you are glad (6.6.49) to Bibbidi bobbidi boo (3.1.50)
BR 30: Chattanoogie Shoe-shine boy (3.1.50) to A Crosby Christmas (5.9.50)
BR 31: That Christmas feeling (5.9.50) to I might be your once-in-a-while (7.2.51)
BR 32: Indian Summer (7.2.51) to Domino (4.10.51)
BR 33: A weaver of dreams (19.10.51) to South Rampart St Parade (5.9.52)
BR 34: Cool Water (5.9.52) to Mademoiselle de Paris (16.5.53)
BR 35: Do you ever think of me? (26.6.53) to Gee I wish I was back in the army (10.4.54)
BR 36: It must be true (21.4.54) to Only forever (16.6.54) (22.11.55)
BR 37: Did your mother come from Ireland? (16.6.54) to The next time it happens
BR 38: Something in common (23.11.55) to When you're in love (27.12.55)
BR 39: Living one day at a time (27.12.55) to Have you met Miss Jones? (12.6.56)
BR 40: Mountain greenery (12.6.56) to I'm confessin' (14.3.57)
BR 41: If I could be with you (14.3.57) to Jack B. Nimble (date uncertain - poss. late 57)
BR 42: Trust your destiny to a star (27.12.57) to Crossing the plains (23.7.59)
BR 43: Buffalo Gals (23.7.59) to The rose in her hair (22.6.60)
BR 44: C'est magnifique (22.6.60) to In the good old summertime (Dec 60)
BR 45: This old man (Dec 60) to My heart still hears the music (9.5.61)
BR 46: Two shadows in the sand (9.5.61) to Younger than Springtime (8.8.63)
BR 47: Tower of Babel (August 1963) to You never had it so good (4.2.64)
BR 48: This land is your land (4.2.64) to South of the border (30.11.65)
BR 49: Lonesome and sorry (30.11.65) to Balling the Jack (March 1968)
BR 50: The song is ended (March 1968) to "Goldilocks" (start) (16.6.69)
BR 51: "Goldilocks" (conclusion) (16.6.69) to We love old St Marys (Dec 1973)
BR 52: The pleasure of your company (17.10.74) to Thou swell (24.2.75)
BR 53: Looking at you (24.2.75) to "Tom Sawyer" (start) (3.9.75)
BR 54: "Tom Sawyer" (continued - occupies both sides of cassette) (5.9.75)
BR 55: "Tom Sawyer" (Conclusion) (5.9.75) to London Palladium Concert (start)(25.6.76)
BR 56: London Palladium Concert (continued - occ. both sides of cassette) (25.6.76)
BR 57: London Palladium Concert (conclusion) (25.6.76) to Beautiful Memories (5.11.76)
BR 58: Don't get around much anymore (mid-1977) to Sail away from Norway (4.11.77)

That completes the listing of Bing's commercial recording released to date. Should previously unissued material be released (such as the 5 poems recorded by Bing on Sept. 14th, 1977), it will be added to the library and details printed in subsequent newsletters.

2. BING'S FILMS

BF 1: Two plus fours (1929) to We're not dressing (start) (1934)
BF 2: We're not dressing (concl) (1934) to Double or nothing (start) (1937)
BF 3: Double or nothing (concl) (1937) to Rhythm on the river (start) (1940)
BF 4: Rhythm on the river (1940) to Going my way (start) (1944)
BF 5: Going my way (concl) to Welcome stranger (1947)
BF 6: Variety Girl (1947) to Mr Music (start) (1950)
BF 7: Mr Music (concl) to White Christmas (start) (1954)
BF 8: White Christmas (concl) to Robin and the 7 hoods (1964)

Due to the fact the obscure short films featuring Bing made in the 30's and 40's do occasionally turn up, this listing will change occasionally. Any major additions will feature in the club newsletter.

3. MISCELLANEOUS MATERIAL

BMA 1 & BMA 2: Musical Autobiography set.

Many members own and enjoy the 5 LP Musical Autobiography set recorded by Bing in the mid-1950's. However, a number expressed disappointment that the records in the 1926 - 1940 period were not the originals (as were the later tracks used in the set.) Therefore, these two cassettes have been prepared. They feature the actual 1926 - 1940 originals, linked together with Bing's spoken commentary from the autobiography discs.

THE VICTORIAN BING CROSBY SOCIETY

CASSETTE BORROWING FORM

To: The Secretary, The Victorian Bing Crosby Society, P.O. Box 422,
South Melbourne, 3205.

Please place my name on the cassette borrowing list.

In order of preference, I would like to borrow the following cassettes. I understand that I will be supplied with two of the cassettes I list and that if I wish to borrow further cassettes , I must re-apply on a similiar form and listing a further four cassettes.

1st preference: _____

2nd preference: _____ (Please list just 1 cassette per line)

3rd preference: _____

4th preference: _____

Please notify me when any of the above become available ( )

Please mail me any of the above when they become available ( )

I understand that I am liable for all postage costs involved with borrowing.

NAME.....(PLEASE PRIN

POSTAL ADDRESS.....(PLEASE PRIN

....
Postcode Phone number

Hello again,
Here we are with our fifth (and probably final)newsletter for 1978. As the year draws to a close, it is amazing to reflect that it is now more than 12 months since Bing passed away! A little later, we'll give you a rundown on the TV and radio tributes presented to mark that anniversary.

This edition of the newsletter is our largest yet. There are quite a large number of past and future functions to cover plus a quantity of newspaper clippings which we thought you would find worth reading. If you ever read something in a newspaper or magazine which you think other members would find interesting, please save it and send it to us. It's pretty hard to keep up with everything that is published, and that would be very helpful.

First off in this issue, as is our custom, here is a rundown of

FUTURE FUNCTIONS

BARBECUE - Sunday, November 12th - Healsville (See encl. sheet)

Batty and Ken Orren have kindly donated the use of their large property at Healsville for our next Barbecue. The day commences at 11.00 am and chops, steak, sausages and salad will provided continuously. Les Saynor will be in charge of the lucky wheel and you'll have the opportunity to win records and cassettes from the Bentleigh Sewing and Record Centre. Hopefully, we'll have a horse available to give the kids rides during the afternoon. So bring the family along and make a day of it. You'll find that a map is enclosed with this newsletter giving precise details of how to find Ken's house. Other details:

Entry: $2 a head for adults, $1 a head for children. B.Y.O. drinks.

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KING OF JAZZ! KING OF JAZZ! KING OF JAZZ! KING OF JAZZ!

SUNDAY 19TH NOVEMBER SUNDAY 26TH NOVEMBER

As you probably know if you read your last newsletter, we'll be screening 'King of Jazz' not once, but twice and that on both occasions

we'll be featuring a live band on stage in the first half of the programme. On November 19th, the band will be Bernie Duggan and the King of Jazz orchestra. On November 26th, the music will be provided by The New Harlem Jazz Band. Both will be featuring songs from the late 20's and early 30's using original arrangements from the period!

It has occurred to us that a few of the younger members may not know too much about the movie 'King of Jazz'. So perhaps a little explanation may not go amiss.

'King of Jazz' is what they used to call an "all singing, all dancing, all colour" spectacular. Filmed in late 1929 and early 1930, it is a musical review built around the talents of the members of the Paul Whiteman orchestra and truly is a spectacular production. The numbers are staged with great dash and style and it is obvious that a great deal of time and money was lavished on the production. The precision dancing is remarkable as are the settings and the costumes.

What makes the movie of particular interest to us is, of course, the featuring of a very young Bing Crosby and the Rhythm Boys. Bing's voice can be heard behind the opening credits and he also appears in several sequences through the movie. The best of these feature the RhythmBoys presenting "Mississippi Mud" and "When the bluebirds and the blackbirds got together" and also the openings to the "Bench in the Park" and "Happy Feet" sequences. Bing can also be seen "playing" the clarinet in the "Rhapsody in Blue" number. Words cannot adequately do justice to this particular use of the Crosby talents. Let us just say for now that you have never seen Bing quite like this before!

Tickets for each night are $6.00 a head which is quite reasonable considering that a live band will be featured and that you will be receiving a printed souvenir booklet featuring several stills from the movie PLUS a 45 rpm record featuring a reissue of a rare 12" 78 from the period which features an English dance band playing selections from the film - a collectors' item in itself.

VENUE: The Camberwell Civic Centre, 340 Camberwell Road, Camberwell.

TIME: 8.00 pm sharp - both evenings.

BOOK NOW: Send a stamped addressed envelope to "King of Jazz Review" P.O. Box 422, South Melbourne 3205.

BING BINGO NIGHT -Monday December 4th 8.00 pm

To raise funds for Social Committee functions, Thelma Wood will be holding a Bing Bingo Night at her home at 47 Wingrove Street, Cheltenham on the above date.

Entry will be 50 cents a head and books of ten tickets will be available for $2.00 each. Door prizes will be awarded and supper will be provided.

So that Thelma can arrange catering in advance, could you please ring NOW and let her know if you intend to come. Tel: 95 9846.

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SO MUCH FOR 1978. NOW, WHAT OF 1979?

FILM AFTERNOON - Collingwood Education Centre. Sunday March 4th.

At this stage, we have not yet finalized the details of the function, but the date is set for sure. So write it down on your calendar for next year, NOW.

MUSIC EVENINGS - All the dates for 1979 now.

Because the Mobil Theatrette has proved to be such a suitable venue for this type of function, we have made arrangements with Mobil to secure the hall on a regular basis in 1979.

This means that next year (and hopefully every year thereafter) our Music Evenings will be held on the first Monday of every second month.

In 1979 therefore, the dates will be: February 5th, April 2nd, June 4th, August 6th, October 8th and December 3rd. PLEASE, enter these dates down now. * * * * * *

DOES ANYONE KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THIS RESTAURANT? We would be most interested to hear your comments!

Bings Restaurant
138 BARKERS RD, HAWTHORN.
SUPERB INTERNATIONAL CUISINE IN ELEGANT SURROUNDINGS
B.Y.O.
Open Mon — Sat. from 6 p.m.
Ph. 818 0288

PAST FUNCTIONS

Music evening - Monday August 28th

This, the first of our functions to be held at the Mobil Centre, was disappointingly attended. Around twenty members turned up to 'fill' the 130 seat theatrette. Considering the convenience of the location and the reasonable weather on the evening, we were quite surprised at the low turnup. The poor crowd wasn't the only problem on the evening; amplifier malfunction nearly put an end to the music too! Fortunately, with the help of the kind people at Mobil, a portable cassette player was found, which, it then turned out had flat batteries! Batteries were at last procured by Ken Orren and nearly an hour late, the evening got underway. In addition to the musical offerings of Ken, Bill Bennett and Les Saynor, we were also most fortunate in having Maria Ermacora bring along her projector together with copies of two of Bing's Mack Sennett shorts - "Blue of the Night" and "I surrender Dear". These were most enthusiastically received by the audience. In fact, so well received that it raises the point that what do you as a member, want from the society? If you are not prepared to come out to see two extremely rare and unusual Crosby films, what do you want to see?? More about that topic a little later.

Dinner dance - Wednesday September 27th

Although once again attendance by members was small and we had to make up the numbers with outsiders, this was certainly the most successful function we have yet held. More than 80 people attended the Golden Sands Reception rooms in East Burwood and it was generally agreed by all present that it was a most enjoyable evening.

During the evening, several raffles were held, major prizes being the cassette player (which was won by Clem Parkinson) and the magnificent ten pound fruit cake prepared and donated by Thelma Wood's sister, Mrs M. Ford. (Thelma is going to thump me when she reads this, but for the life of me I can't remember her sister's first name, nor can I remember who won the cake! Ooops.)

Anyway, I must thank Thelma and all the other members of the Social Committee who worked so hard to make the evening a success.

Here's the machine that put Bing Crosby on tape...

Ampex MAGNETIC TAPE RECORDER

The ability of the Ampex Magnetic Tape Recorder to maintain its unique high-level of fidelity has been fully demonstrated over the past season on the Crosby program. This "true-to-life" reproduction is the result of engineering improvements by the Ampex Company on the high-quality German magnetic tape machines.

The American Broadcasting Company has purchased 24 Ampex recorders to date and is using them from 15 to 18 hours a day in commercial network operation. The results, from the standpoint of quality and reliability, have been unbelievably satisfactory, and the cost of ABC's recording operation has been reduced substantially. There is no waste of material as with discs; there are no discards; and editing on tape is made simply with a pair of scissors. Based on average operation and personnel costs, the full price of this machine will be saved in a very short time. *Write for full details.*

EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTORS

East of the Rockies
AUDIO & VIDEO PRODUCTS CORP.
681 Fifth Avenue, New York 22, N. Y.
Telephone PLaza 9-4031

West of the Rockies
BING CROSBY ENTERPRISES, INC.
9028 Sunset Boulevard, Hollywood 46, California
Telephone Crestview 11171

Keen Crosby collectors will of course know that Bing was responsible for the popularizing of modern tape recording in America. In this 1948 advertisement, the young Ampex Company tells the world of its achievements.

Monday - October 16th - Annual General Meeting.

As with the music evening of August 28th, our 1st A.G.M. was very poorly attended. As a result of this, one of the main topics for discussion during the evening was "Why are attendances dropping off?" After considerable debate, the concensus of the meeting was that there is no real dissatisfaction with the club; that lack of time was often a reason for members not attending. As one of the things we intend to do in 1979 is give members ample time to prepare for functions(see page 3), this remains to be seen.

The first item on the agenda for the 16th was the election of your committee for the next 12 months. With the exception of Audrey Evens, our Secretary, who chose not to stand, and Jim McManus who is overseas, all Committee members were returned unopposed.

New Secretary for the club is Ken Henderson while Jim McManus's place on the committee will be taken by Geoff Orr. Your committee for 1979 is therefore:

President	Bob Machliss
Vice President	Ken Orren
Treasurer	Thelma Wood
Secretary	Ken Henderson
General Committee	Les Saynor
	Adrian Fowler
	Bill Bennett
	Geoff Orr

Change to Constitution

Due to the fact that the Club is beginning to accumulate assets, it has become necessary to amend our constitution to cover disposal of such assests should the club at any future date wind-up. Therefore, the following Constitutional change was presented and accepted by those present at the meeting.

That at such future time that the Society be wound up, that any assets belonging to said society be sold and that together with any funds remaining after all expenses are deducted, all monies received shall be donated equally to The Salvation Army and the Lady Nell Seeing Eye Dog Home.

President's Message - extracts

It's hard to believe that 14 months have passed since that first meeting at the Caulfield Community Centre when we discussed the formation of this society. A few weeks after that meeting, with the sudden and unexpected passing of Bing, it seemed that the new society might prove to be stillborn but I believe that it is a tribute to the memory of the singer that it has grown and spread in the year just past. And so, the Victorian Bing Crosby Society is one year old. No doubt, mistakes have been made along the way, but for these I take full responsibility. However, the year certainly had many more plusses than minus's, and I would like to take a moment to thank our hard-working committee, in particular our Treasurer Thelma Wood and our Vice-President, Ken Orren, without whose help, enthusiasm and energy, much of what we did accomplish last year would never have been realized.

Accomplishments such as our Dinner Dance, just passed; the screening of several rarely seen Crosby movies; the purchasing of King of Jazz. Here I would like to give thanks to Frank Wood, who loaned us the necessary money to purchase the film.

However, it would be wrong to say that everything went as we would have liked in 1977. In particular, several recent functions have not been as well-attended as we would have liked. To find out the reasons for this, we look to the members for advice.

During 1977, we exchanged correspondence several times with Kathryn Crosby who has accepted honorary life membership in the Society, and Card No1 that was reserved for Bing. Also during 1977, we have been fortunate in obtaining sympathetic treatment from the media, in particular Bert Newton of 3UZ who has given us a great deal of free publicity.

In closing, I'd like to remind everyone that we should never lose sight of why this society exists. And that is to prepetuate the memory of a singer who was a part of our lives for as long as most of us can remember. Bing Crosby was an entertainer who reached more people and touched more lives than any other performer in history. And he left us all with memories that are each uniquely our own.

Thank you for coming this evening. I wish you all the very best for 1978. Thank you.

Bob Machliss - President.

Yesterday is alive and well on radio

Frank Sinatra (1943)

WE ALL try to go back to a simpler, more pleasant time when we were younger and eggs were cheaper.

For those of us who like to remember the past through music, there are two nostalgia programmes on radio: Sentimental Journey, running for seven years (LO, 7.15pm on Saturdays) and Nostalgia Unlimited, a more recent offering from Community Radio (CR, 8.15 and midnight, Sundays).

Sydney producer of Sentimental Journey, Bob Sharp, estimates there are between 50,000 and 60,000 listeners throughout Australia who turn the indicators on their dials away from the frantic synthetic wailings of the pop world to remember a less amplified era.

Sharp said: "I think the appeal of our show is that it enables people to glimpse their past — for the young we evoke a time they never really knew."

It was a time when vocalists were merely another instrument in the band. When the English wooed their young with the sweet foppish sounds of Al Bowly a' Dick Henderson. Or, later, when America was struck with a reed thin Sinatra, singing calf-li' before his fans.

It was a time when music was both extravagantly romantic, and just plain silly. When the aim was not to shock or raise social consciousness, but simply to entertain.

One way Sentimental Journey tried to appeal to a young audience, said Sharp, was by not taking themselves or the often quaint sound of their music, too seriously.

Both programmes concentrate on music from the thirties and forties. As Neville Wragg, presenter/producer of the CR show, put it, "When Haley comes in we bow out"

And, according to Sharp, both these programmes are "big on people dying". Last week for instance, both ran tributes to Bing Crosby, on the first anniversary of his death.

Sentimental Journey, tightly scripted, works roughly on the format of requests and a 78 rpm segment in the first hour followed by a special — usually from the BBC — in the last hour (recently they serialised the Ella Fitzgerald story).

The middle hour is keep as varied as possible — when Jack Warner, last of the Warner Bros. died, it was an excuse to listen to clips from his films, ranging from Casablanca to Camelot.

Sharp told "Green Guide" his show was trying to integrate more historical material with the music. By not just concentrating on celebrities the programme's scope is increased and its listener appeal widened.

Research and writing takes a week, with recording on Friday morning. When Crosby died on a Friday night, the show had to be recorded direct.

"Since then we spend our spare moments praying that celebrities don't die between Friday afternoon and Saturday night", said Sharp.

Whereas the music for Sentimental Journey comes mostly from the ABC library, the CR show is based on Neville Wragg's collection of some 12,000 records.

Wragg was programme manager of 2UZ for 13 years and now works for a mercantile agency. The programme takes him all week to prepare in his spare time. Once a month Bob Matchless from the Crosby Society joins him and once every two months Bill Weeden of the Sinatra Society comes in to lend a hand.

Sentimental Journey and Nostalgia Unlimited attract a lively correspondence — quite out of proportion with most radio programmes. Although many are just request letters, Sharp said a fair proportion of listeners were motivated to express gratitude for the old-style music that was played.

After a special on thirties tenor Richard Tauber, and his glamorous wife Diana Napier's visit to Australia 40 years ago, Sentimental Journey received a letter from Miss Napier wanting to know why she had not been asked to assist with the programme.

Because of responsive and grateful audience, it is unlikely that the two nostalgia programmes will be axed. As Sharpe said "We look forward to the time Mick Jagger dies and we can do a feature on the Rolling Stones."

Still it will be some time before our nostalgia programmes take that rocky road.

The above appeared in the Age Green Guide on Oct 25th. It gives our friend Neville Wragg a good write-up. Goes to show that there is an audience for nostalgia still.

CASSETTE LIBRARY - COMPLETE AT LAST!!!

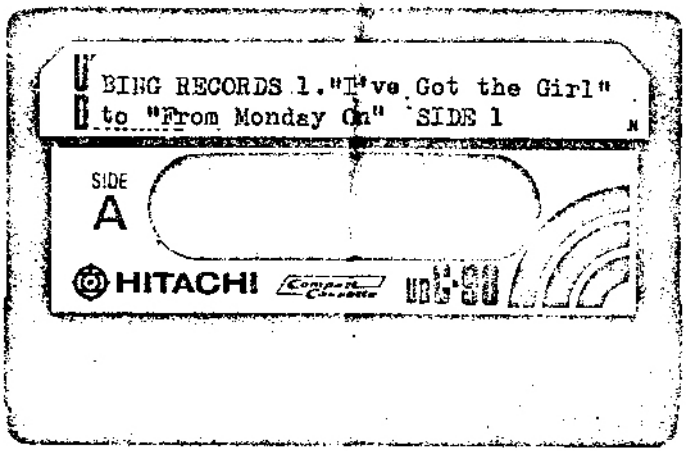
In your envelope, you will have also found a copy of our Cassette Library Catalogue. After a Herculean effort, we have finally succeeded in putting virtually every one of Bing's commercial records on cassette in chronological order - a grand total of fifty-eight cassettes!

These are now available to all members to borrow and detailed instructions on how to apply for cassettes, costs, etc, are included in the catalogue. Please read them carefully before you apply.

In addition to Bing's commercial records on cassette, we also have all of Bing's songs from his actual film soundtracks on tape. And these are especially great. Bing held nothing back on his film singing, as these tapes demonstrate.

That's not to put down Bing's commercial records. It's fascinating to hear his voice and style develop over the years. From the inexperienced band singer with the Paul Whiteman orchestra in 1926 through his first solo records under his own name in 1929, through the great early years of success in the 1930's, through the 40's with Bing at his peak of popularity, through the 50's with the new 'Buddy Cole' sound into the 60's and 70's up to just four days before his death.

If you've never thought of borrowing cassettes from the club library, try it just once. You won't be sorry. A borrowing form is included for your convenience.



NEW BOOK ON BING.

Well, actually, it's an updated reprint of Bing's official biography which first appeared in 1975. A couple more chapters have been added to cover Bing's last years and the whole thing has been re-issued in paperback, the cover of which you see reproduced opposite.
Good news is that the book is widely available around Melbourne. At $3.45, it's a good buy, and if you don't know Bing's story, it's recommended reading.
Still to come are Kathryn's book and one by Ken Barnes.

THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY - HAS IT REALLY BEEN 12 MONTHS?!

Incredible as it seems, it has been a full year since Bing left us. However, compared to all the banging and shouting that accompanied the first anniversary of Elvis Presley's death in August, the tributes to Bing were, I felt, especially where newspapers were concerned, inadequate. On TV and radio, we were a little better served. Channel 7 in particular, screened the marvellous two hour special "Bing Crosby His life and Legend" which must be one of the best things ever done on Bing. Considering that the producers of the programme didn't have the rights to most of Bing's pre-1950 film output, they did a marvellous job with what they had. An excellent show, I hope that it will be repeated in the near future. Graham Kemlo, the Herald's TV critic, gave the programme this favourable review on October 2nd.

I COPIED BING, SAYS DEAN

In an amazingly frank television confession, Dean Martin admits he copied Bing Crosby.

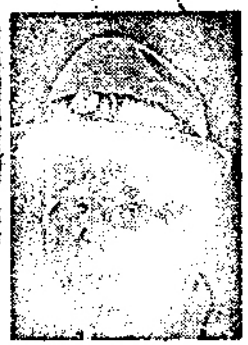
"I copied his style of singing. I tried to copy his acting. In fact, just about anything he did I tried to do," Martin says.

But Martin goes even further in "Bing Crosby: His Life and Legend" on Seven on Wednesday at 8.30 p.m.

Dino, whose "nicely thank you" style is itself copied in bars the world over, says Perry Como and Frank Sinatra also copied Bing.

"They copied him just to get started, then they developed their own style," he says.

Now I'm not sure how the chairman of the board and Mr Como would take to the little ol' wine-drinker's remarks.



Bing Crosby

Dean Martin

But it is probably a measure of the esteem in which Bing Crosby was held that a man of Martin's talent gives credit where he thinks it is due.

It is only one of many credits in the two-hour special screened in America in May.

We start back in Spokane, Washington, where Harry Lillis Crosby grew up.

"Bing", we discover was the name of Crosby's favorite comic character as a child, and the name stuck through a five-decade career.

William Holden is the narrator — he co-starred in what is regarded as Crosby's most challenging film, "The Country Girl".

We see clips of his old films, and his co-stars reminisce.

Probably the best story is from "College Humor," the first film in which Crosby didn't play Bing.

His ears were taped back.

In a tender moment with co-star Mary Carlisle, one ear popped out.

The program sheds new light on the man moviegoers saw as a happy-go-lucky, indifferent sort of bloke.

In private he was a man who displayed little affection, even to his family.

Gary Crosby, his first son, said his father would not express emotion in a physical way at home.

Jimmy Van Heusen, who wrote most of Crosby's songs, said he would not sing the words, "I love you."

We are privileged then to see some of his home movies alongside the scenes from most of his Hollywood movies and television shows.

This is a fitting tribute to one o the greats, and it comes from the greats of American show business — Fred Astaire, Rosemary Clooney, Ella Fitzgerald, Princess Grace, Danny Kaye, Ethel Merman, Merle Oberon and more.

It was conceived by his widow, Kathryn Grant Crosby, following the airing of his last Christmas special after his death on October 14 last year.

The final scene from the program is part of that Christmas special. Bing sings "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" with Twiggy.

Then the most memorable, most moving scene of the tribute, "White Christmas" — the beautiful sound still lingers in my ears.

Other TV tributes to Bing included a repeat showing of his 50th anniversary TV special which was taped in March of last year (and ended with Bing falling off the stage resulting in his being laid up at home for 4 months) and a promised (although mysteriously withdrawn at the last minute) reshowing of Bing's 1975 Parkinson interview show.

As well as this, there was the usual midnight to dawn showing of some of the 'Road' pictures plus a sprinkling of Crosby movies, all frequently shown before.

Radio was a little better. Bert Newton devoted his Friday 13th programme to Bing; Philip Brady paid his tribute on Saturday evening (14th) on 3AW as did 3LO during their Sentimental Journey programme, and yours truly presented a tribute on 'Nostalgia Unlimited' the following night.

The Crosby you don't know

By MARY MAXWELL, Herald Radio Writer

Saturday is the first anniversary of Bing Crosby's death.

To mark the occasion, Bert Newton will devote two hours of his 9 a.m. to noon 3UZ program tomorrow morning chatting with — and playing records from — the collection of Crosby fan Bob Machliss.

Machliss, who works for an advertising agency, had collected Crosby items from all over the world for 16 years.

Among the rare issues Machliss plans to bring in for Newton is Crosby singing "My Blue Heaven" for a radio broadcast. He is accompanied by Harpo Marx on the harp.

Harpo was the Marx brother who never talked, yet before Bing sings, Gary Cooper interviews Harpo with very funny results.

Today Machliss' vast collection includes original Crosby 78s, LPs, movie soundtracks and private unissued records.

Machliss has built a radio series around Bing — "The Crosby Collection" — which is heard once a month on 3CR.

This Sunday Machliss will present his "Crosby Collection" on 3CR in "Nostalgia Unlimited" at 9 p.m.

A COUPLE OF OTHER PRESS CLIPPINGS OF INTEREST.

As I said earlier in this newsletter, if you come across any clippings that you think might be interesting for our members, send them in. It's pretty hard to keep up with everything that appears.

Kathryn still grieves

ONE year after the death of Bing Crosby, his youthful widow, Kathryn, is experiencing great difficulties writing her reminiscences of their 20-year marriage, because of her continuing grief.

"The pain is so intense that I can't write things down," said Kathryn (below), who had three children by the "Old Groaner" — Harry, 20, Mary Frances, 18, and Nathaniel, who is 17 tomorrow. "Now I am dictating into a tape recorder.

"My book will have a lot of Bing's letters to me. He was a beautiful writer and they express a side people do not know."

Bing died last October aged 73 after collapsing on a Spanish golf course — he had completed his round — and Kathryn at first planned to return to the acting career she dropped on her marriage.

She has toured in the Broadway and West End hit "Same Time Next Year" and has forged a friendship with her leading man, Tony Russell — they spend much of the drama in bed together, on a once-a-year reunion.

Kathryn, who was courted by Bing for five years before they married, has no financial problems. The crooner left an estate in excess of $24 million and his record royalties add to it every year.

NEXT month marks the death of that all time great crooner, Bing Crosby.

Bing, who was a foil for Bob Hope's humor, a fanatic golfer and to his fans, the Elvis Presley of his generation, was also a good sport as Launceston publican, Jock Connell can verify.

Mr. Connell, a well-known City South footballer of his day, was one of the few people who had the gall to telephone the singer at home on Christmas Eve and ask him to croon I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas.

Not only did he croon but he also sent Mr. Connell and his drinking mates of that evening 20 years ago, some albums and photographs of himself and his son, Gary.

"He sounded a good bloke, a real genuine bloke," Mr. Connell recalled yesterday.

"When he sent the photos a couple of weeks later I nearly collapsed. I used to idolise him.

"I never missed a film of his and I still reckon he'd do all right on the hit parade."

Mr. Connell, the owner of the Avoca Hotel and lessee of the Enfield Hotel, in Charles Street, Launceston, said Bing always promised to look him and his mates up yet he had no idea where Tasmania was.

The crooner died of a heart attack on a golf course on October 14 last year.

RECORDS RECORDS RECORDS RECORDS RECORDS RECORDS

Record releases on the local scene are a little limited at the moment. Over the page we've printed a couple of reviews from the Age 'Green Guide'. One overseas import that you might find interesting however is a 45 rpm pressing available only from the Batman Library in Little Bourke Street. It's Bing's recording from 1965 of "Do you hear what I hear" backed by "Christmas Dinner Country Style". Batman's price is $1.80 which is quite reasonable for an item of this nature. Bing's 45's from any period are hard to come by and this one is well worth having, especially as it's a re-pressing with obviously, no wear.

OVERSEAS ISSUES

A recent issue in the U.S., worth having for anyone who missed out on it the first time round, is the soundtrack LP from 'Road to Hong Kong'. The LP only features three songs by Bing and all are duets with either Hope or Joan Collins (yes, that Joan Collins!) but as it has been unobtainable for many years, it's worth putting a copy aside when you can. Liberty label, LOM 16002.

Another reissue, this time from England, and one that's even harder to get is Bing's 1957 recording of "Ali Baba and the 40 thieves" in which Bing tells the story and sings a number of songs specially written for the disc. Again, well worth having. Wonderland, WLP 314.

On the last page of this newsletter, we'll tell you how you either get these records yourself, or get someone else to get them for you.

And now, those local reviews from the Age.

Bing And The Andrews Sisters (MCA, COPS 7714) and **The Andrews Sisters: A Collection Of Golden Performances** (RCA, ABCA 30021). Bing Crosby was already a veteran of recording when he teamed with the Andrews Sisters trio in September 1939.

To think that when Bing cut his first record in October, 1926, the girls then would have been six, nine and 11 years old respectively.

In the double album with Bing, their earliest tracks were recorded in 1939 and their latest in 1952.

Both albums will hit the right spot with music buffs who hanker for the sounds of that period, and a couple of tracks from each selection includes Sparrow In The Treetop, The Yodelling Ghost, Beat Me Daddy Eight To The Bar, and Don't Sit Under The Apple Tree.

High Society: The Soundtrack From The Film (World Record Club, S/4776) This was the film in which Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra performed together for the first time. And Grace Kelly made her debut as a singer.

Sentimentalists will want to buy this one.

Remebered affectionately are Celeste Holm and Louis Armstrong and his Band with Well Did You Evah? Who Wants To Be A Millionaire, True Love and Mind If I Make Love To You

LETTERS

From Peggy Martin, East Melb.

My first sight and sound of Bing Crosby was in the short film "Blue of the Night" at the Palais Theatre, St Kilda. I remember going home, raving about the singer and saying most emphatically that he will be a big success. From then on, everything stopped whenever his voice came over the radio. If anyone criticised him, I was most upset. I remember once I was listening to "The Last Roundup" and of course, not doing little jobs around the house. My grandmother turned the music off and I finsihed up in tears. I also used to sit up every night for one of the radio stations to close down with "Wrap your troubles in Dreams."

As time went by and Bing started making films, quite a few records were available and my great thrill was to hear Bing's voice coming over the speakers of the merry-go-round at St Kilda Beach. It was quite exciting walking along the esplanade hearing "Thanks" and "Black Moonlight", especially if one had a boyfriend along. I wonder if anyone else remembers this nostalgia? (Do you? Then let us know. All letters received are published. BM)

From Mrs E, Vernon, Surrey Hills
Being English, my fondest memory of Bing is 'White Christmas because all my Christmas's used to be white. Even though I have been is Australia for 54 years, every time I hear Bing, it takes me back home.

From James M Dobbie, Queensland (address available on application)
I am a freelance journalist/collector interested in swapping movie soundtracks - the older the better. Artists such as Charles 'Buddy' Rogers, Betty Grable, Ruth Etting, etc. Also will swap dance music of the 30's and 40's, recorded onto tape from 78's.

From Ken Twiss, Tacoma, Washington, USA
I am to appear at the Mayor's office on Friday morning to be issued the proclamation that will honour Bing by the city of Tacoma. I will send you a copy of the proclamation, and also a copy of the resolution by the County Commissioners. There will be a display of Crosbyana at the Tacoma Public Library From Oct. 9 - 14. It will be in a room by itself and I will try and take some snapshots of it.

WHERE TO GET YOUR RECORDS The first place to try for all your LP's, local issues and imports is The Bentleigh Sewing and Record Centre, 350 Centre Rd, Bentleigh. 97 1050. Society members get 10% discount and if Ken Herderson doesn't have what you want, he'll get it in for you.
If you want to do your own importing, write to either Dave Carey's Swing Shop, 1b Mitcham Lane, Streatham, Londorn SW 16, E ngland, or Rare Records, PO Box 10518, Glendale, California, 91209, USA.

Other Crosby Societies: The American Club Crosby, c/o Pat Sullivan, 1301 Sheridan Ave, Apt 96, Chico, California 95926 USA.
Bing Pictorial, c/o Frank Murphy, 32 Ferndale Ave, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear, NE 28 7 NE U.K. The International Crosby Circle, c/O Reg Bristo, 7 Greenmeadow Close, Cwmbran, Gwent, NP4 3NR U.K.
And that's it for this newsletter. Have a happy Christmas , and be listening for the 'Crosby Collector' on 3CR at 9.00 on Sunday Nov. 12th when we'll feature a special preview of 'King of Jazz'.

Bob Maehl